



1980

SEAMASTER

**The Official Journal of
the TASI's Association**

HMS VERNON
PORTSMOUTH

YOUR COMMITTEE(OR LACK OF)

PRESIDENT	CAPTAIN OXLEY	CAPTAIN HMS VERNON
CHAIRMAN	FCPO STEVENS	DRYAD 320
VICE CHAIRMAN	VACANT	
TREASURER	CPO WILLIAMSON	VERNON 2106
CLUB MANAGER	CPO MEASEY	VERNON 2403 2228
SOCIAL SECRETARY	VACANT	
SECRETARY/EDITOR	VACANT	
SUBMARINE REP	VACANT	
MW REP	VACANT	
AIRCREW REP	VACANT	

PLEA

ANY VOLUNTEERS PLEASE

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ITEM 1 - CHAIRMANS LETTER

I believe the title of this Magazine should be called "AT LAST" in view of the long spell without one (last one 1976). A great deal has happened in the last six years and with the magazine I hope to bring you up to date and to try and get some feedback with regards to the Association as I see it.

To bring you up to date, I took over as chairman on 17 December 1980 and at the same time Captain OXLEY The Captain HMS VERNON accepted the post of President of the Association. It is at this stage that I would like to thank on your behalf Captain K SUTHERLAND and CPO J GREEN for their hard work put in to keep the Association going.

Generally the Association has revolved round the Social Club but in the present economic climate and the effect of the SMOPS organisation plus the hesistant move complete to HMS DRYAD the club has suffered and consequently the Association with it.

Recently I published a letter in the PRI's magazine by kind permission of their chairman FCPO JOHN NEWING and Editors asking for support and comments as to the future. Alas so far (one month later) this has been to no avail, as far as fleet members are concerned. However the members in HMS VERNON and HMS DRYAD appeared to see a need for an Association but not for the club. If the club were to be closed the small financial backing provided for the Association would be lost, therefore as with any Association two factors arise. One being communication by the magazine and two the money to provide it.

I have therefore enclosed as a back page to this magazine a small questionnaire which I plead with you to fill in and return to me even if there is no interest, NIL returns are required.

The Association in its present form as I see it is a non runner. However I do feel that we should have some form of identity within the SMOPS organisation as the PRI's and GI's. We in the Underwater world make the vital step towards a change of membership with the advent of the Operations branch and therefore if only half our members past and present were to become active members we could and would be the stronger of the three associations. Much has been talked about regarding the amalgamation of the three associations but at the time of writing nothing has been decided. Two questions are asked:

- i) Who is a member of the ASWI's Association?
- ii) Why the ASWI's Association?

In answering the two questions I carried out an investigation and it seems the reason for renaming the TASI's to ASWI's is as follows:- When the Operations branch was formed in 1975 the Instructor rate was removed, hence the end of the TASI's at the same time the Minewarfare branch was formed and the Weapons equipment and manning was taken over by the WE branch. Consequently a new name was required. So it was said by the Committee at that time that:-

- i) Sonar was still part of the ASW world
- ii) The PO Sonar and above would be the Instructors of the ASW world
- iii) With i) and ii) in mind it was first decided to call the association Sonar Senior Rates Association however a large number of TASI's had moved with the Minewarfare branch, so to amalgamate all together the name ASWI's was put forward and agreed at the AGM in November 1975.

With regards to question i) full membership is open to the following:-

ALL TASI's serving and ex-serving
ALL PO(S) on completion of PO(S) course
ALL PO(MW) on completion of PO(MW) course.

Honorary Membership to all full members of the other 2 branches(Radar and Missile)

Associate Membership to all TASI's/PO's now with Seaman branch

Associate Membership to all Diving Senior Rates

Well enough from me, next time I hope my letter will be the shortest and all you members will contribute.

Please give me your support.

TTFN
Steve

ITEM 2 - HMS VERNON REDEVELOPMENT AND THE ASWI'S CLUB

Our Motto "Vernon Semper Viret" translates to "Vernon will always flourish". To flourish it must be modernised and our current plan envisages a multistage expenditure of a total of some £20M, half of which would go on a thorough update of that

priceless asset the Vernon Waterfront. The remainder would be spent on modernising to scale our existing accommodation providing a new galley and victualling complex etc; and the demolition of buildings such as 21 building and the old Cinema to make way for a new Store Complex and a new Sick Bay and Dental Surgery. In the very long run the ASWI's present club house is also due for demolition. This will not happen until there is a suitable alternative arrangement for your Association; and in any case no move of any sort is foreseen for at least 5 years, which takes us up to 1986.

In the long run, where your club is housed and the manner in which the Association continues is very much to your membership. HMS VERNON is the alma mater of the TAS branch and history cannot be rubbed out by any of the changes to branch structure which have been happening in the past few years. Torpedo men, TAS men and ASW men will always be welcome in HMS VERNON.

ITEM 3 - PO SONAR OFFICE ROOM 104

Leave has finished and all the humans are back again. For the last two weeks life has been quiet except for Doris the cleaner who came in every day to see how I was and give my carpets a good once over. You see I'm Room 104 and I allow the PO Sonar staff and the Junior Officer Training staff to use me. Mind you sometimes they get the idea that I'm here for their convenience.

To get down to my message there are three courses running at the moment PO 34, 35 and 35X. PO 36 will start in August when I get my next break. As some of you may know there is a shortage of PO Sonars in the Fleet so all you people who have aspirations of furthering their career do so. We can always fit you in. That shouldn't mean though that by completing the Task Book qualifies you to thinking you will pass the course. Training Administrators should ensure that Task books are completed fairly and fully and that PE boards are carried out to make sure that sufficient standards are achieved before the commencement of the course.

I noticed this week that Lt NICHOLSON has left the office and has moved to a more plush one at Dartmouth Naval College. The humans and I wish him him the best of luck and thank him for his his efforts whilst in VERNON.

We must also welcome Lt MOXLEY who joins the staff on 12th May to fill the vacant seat.

Any queries about PO Sonars may be directed to this room via VERNON Extension 2287 and no doubt Lt Cdr AIKEN, CPO BACON CPO GOLDING or PO HOOD can help you.

As this is the first Newsletter may I wish the Editorial staff every success and perhaps I'll get the gash bin under CPO BACON's desk to write the next article. No doubt this article will be in there. Hopefully after its been read.

Editor. I knew walls had ears but I didn't know they could write as well.

Cheers what about the other rooms.

ITEM 4 - THE PASSIVE SONAR SUB-BRANCH

Yes, it does exist. Anybody walking through the top floor of Creasey West in VERNON recently may have noticed a certain amount of dazed looking Senior Rates punching calculators, stabbing pages in books with a sharp multi pointed instruments, muttering strange words like Demon, Aux, Umk and that their brain Hertz, followed by occasional cries of 'Got you! You Bastard'

No, it wasn't a scene from 'Batman at the Loony Bin' but a class of Passive Sonar Analysts trying to crack their latest exam.

The branch history starts only in 1976, in line with the development of a new sonar which is still undergoing trials, and eventually will be fitted to some Leanders and later classes of A/S Frigates.

Passive Sonar is not just listening to HE as elder members would call it, but is a sometimes deep and complex subject which normally generates self interest and higher professional standards. Without going too deeply: analysts are trained to detect and classify contacts from acoustic signatures, which all ships and S/Us emit.

The main advantage is range, which is far in excess of active sonar, and accurate classification of the type of contact gained.

Submarines and LRMPA's have been using these techniques for years, and now, we are taking several leaves out of their books and adding a few of our own.

I don't want to give the impression that this system is the be all and end all, but it is a very big leap in the right direction, and if the balloon did go up I would rather be in a nice quiet frigate listening for something else, rather than one which is transmitting its presence to every submarine within 100 miles. (That's providing they get me back from a deep cave in the Welsh mountains). Still, I suppose, after employing all the noise reduction techniques and achieving a super quiet frigate, the sneaky bastards will drop a bomb on us.

At present, the split into the Passive sub-branch takes place at Senior Rate level, but will be part of the modular streaming at other rates in the future. The branch consists of 13 Senior Rates and approximately 30 Junior Rates who will hopefully be retained. It is considered that a man needs a two or three year apprenticeship before reaching a reasonable standard.

However, to cut matters short, as I don't want to end up writing a Service paper on the subject. I will list the Senior Rates in the branch as they might answer your queries. Who wants to read boring confidential matter in a magazine anyway.

Founder Members 1976

CPO Mick HODGINS

CPO Thomas CRAIG

CPO Ging FOWLER

Yours truly Jake LAKE

Followed in 1978 by

CPO Terry DAVISON

CPO Freddie FOX

PO Trevor ENGLISH

PO Chris BRIEFS

PO Pete CLIPSTONE

And the new box 1980
CPO Pat PATTINSON
PO Dickie DREW
PO Rab BUTLER
PO Steve MEREDITH

The next analysts course starts in June this year but due to cuts, our predicted expansion rate has slowed somewhat, and we can't foresee accurately past that date for future courses. However, if you have any casual questions or formal ones drop in and see me(Jake LAKE) or our resident submariner Bungy WILLIAMSON or our reliefs(Ging FOWLER and Chris BRIERS) and providing the workload allows, we will endeavour to answer them. No doubt you will probably be through the section again in the future.

Editor: Thanks Jake. Useful and I hope informative to our members.

ITEM 5 - EXTRACT FROM LAST MAGAZINE

5. Changes such as the Royal Navy is undergoing at the moment always create cause for concern and to a certain degree, confusion in the minds of those who do not appreciate the facts that govern them and/or have never experienced similar changes in the Fleet.

6. Since 1946 the ASW branch has experienced its fair share of changes and many of you will re-call the reluctance SDI's and TI's had in accepting the combination of the two branches to form the TD branch from which the TASI was borne. It took time to accept the change and once accepted the branch was split yet again to form the UC and UW sub branches. It was during this period that the first Minewarfare branch was formed, but the MD rate did not survive for very long, now we are re-introducing it under the Operations scheme as the Mine-warfare branch. However, the important fact to remember is that we survived it all despite the criticisms, injuries to self pride and reluctances, efficiency maintained its balance. It did so mainly because the SDI and TI, despite his personal feelings, made it so. Now the problems are yours, the SDI/TI became a TASI, the TASI becomes the PO Sonar, each in turn suffers a change in title, but more important gains additional responsibilities and status.

7. For those who look upon the Association in name only and those who accept its social life may have overlooked its true functionie.

- a. Promote 'Espirit De Corps' amongst its members
- b. To assist in all respects any member of the Association
- c. To expand the social life and activities of its members

a. and c. have been achieved, but b. has been overlooked by the majority, whereas it should be taking top priority for ironing out those problems that the current changes are causing. Drip amongst yourselves by all means, but also let your committee know about them either by writing to the Chairman/Secretary or more important attend meetings. Only by this action can your drips be analysed and actioned as considered necessary.

6. TASI's in Vernon have been in on the Operations branch as it effects ASW from the beginning. They have played a major part in the design of courses and task books, so the answers are here, you only have to ask your Association and they will assist.

By Editor.

This still applies today especially paragraph 7 in which at present c. is improving but a. and b. need a lot more attention.

ITEM 6 - CLUB MANAGERS REPORT

Hello,

Paddy Measey's the name some of you know me some of you don't. To those who know me come in and renew old acquaintances. To those who don't come in and we will make some. My theme is the same as the chairman's, the Club which provides financial backing to the Association needs your support. From being a dead "cocky" with its legs in the air we are now a going concern. The club is in the black, the Association is producing its first magazine in 6 years and we are looking forward to comments from the TAS/Sonar/Mine warfare/Diving world of the fleet.

The club provides the usual alcoholic refreshments but is available as somewhere to meet other members of your profession, have something to eat, drink soft drinks and beverages and TALK SHOP without being picked up by mess members. This is in keeping with the original ideals of the Association.

The club is also available to members, associate members, ships and messes as a venue for socials and private "do's" in accordance with Association and Vernon Standing orders. Since January we have had a wedding reception, christening, entertained Squash teams and been used for numerous drafting runs. We have in front of us a Cheese and Wine "do" which will have completed by the time this reaches you, a visit from Leicester Senior Service Association, another christening and the Trophy to view being fought over by GI's and PRI's associations.

So in closing I will remind you the club is there for your use so please use it, and support us.